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AMENDED CLAIM SET

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The claims have been amended as set forth in the following listing of the claims:

1. (previously presented) An inflator, comprising:

a cylindrical inflator housing which is closed at one end thereof and having an opening at

the other end, and in which a pressurized gas is charged;

a diffuser portion connected to the opening of the inflator housing, and having a gas

discharge port therein;

a rupturable plate that closes at least one portion of a gas discharge passage, the gas

discharge passage extending from the inflator housing to the gas discharge port of the diffuser

portion;

an igniter including an igniting portion covered by a cup and provided within the diffuser

portion such that an axial direction of the inflator housing is orthogonal to an axial direction of

the igniter, the igniter generating a combustion product upon activation thereof; and

a fragile portion provided in a peripheral surface of the cup and opposing the rupturable

plate, such that the combustion product is directed towards a single direction.

2. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 1, wherein said

fragile portion is ruptured upon an activation of the igniter and a rupturing energy acts on the

rupturable plate from the fragile portion.

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3. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 1, wherein the fragile

portion provided in the igniter is constituted with a combination of a hole provided in the cup

covering the igniting portion of the igniter and a sealing tape closing the hole from the inside of

the cup.

4. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 1, wherein the fragile

portion provided in the igniter comprises a portion surrounded by a groove or a portion with a

notch, which is provided in a side face of the cup covering the igniting portion of the igniter.

5. (currently amended) An inflator, comprising:

a cylindrical inflator housing which is closed at one end thereof and having an opening at

the other end, and in which a pressurized gas is charged;

a diffuser portion connected to the opening of the inflator housing, and having a gas

discharge port therein;

a rupturable plate that closes at least one portion of a gas discharge passage, the gas

discharge passage extending from the inflator housing to the gas discharge port of the diffuser

portion;

an igniter, attached to the diffuser portion and provided spaced apart from the rupturable

plate prior to an activation of the igniter, for rupturing the rupturable plate disposed in the

diffuser portion such that an axial direction of the inflator housing is orthogonal to an axial

direction of the igniter; and

means for directing a rupturing energy, generated by activation of the igniter, in a

direction that exactly opposes the rupturable plate to rupture the rupturable plate,

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wherein said means is a guiding passage, disposed inside the diffuser portion, for guiding

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the rupturing energy discharged from the igniter to the rupturable plate formed in the diffuser

portion, and the rupturing energy is guided to a central portion of the rupturable plate or a portion

thereof in the vicinity of the central portion by action of the guiding passage.

6. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 5, wherein the guiding

passage surrounds at least an igniting portion of the igniter and disposed in a direction

orthogonal to the axial direction of the inflator housing, and provided with a hole that exactly

opposes the rupturable plate, such that a gas generated by the igniter is directed in the direction

orthogonal to the axial direction of the inflator housing inside the diffuser portion.

7. (canceled)

8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 1, wherein the

pressurized gas is charged in a single space defined by the cylindrical inflator housing and the

diffuser portion.

10. (currently amended) An inflator, comprising:

a cylindrical inflator housing which is closed at one end thereof and having an opening

portion at the other end and in which a pressurized gas is charged;

a diffuser portion which is connected <u>directly to the to the opening portion</u> of the inflator

housing, and having a gas discharge port;

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a gas discharge passage extending from the inflator housing to the gas discharge port of

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the diffuser portion, at least one portion of the gas discharge passage being closed by a

rupturable plate;

an igniter, for rupturing the rupturable plate, disposed in the diffuser portion, such that

the axial direction of the inflator housing and the axial direction of the igniter obliquely cross

with each other, the igniter generating a rupturing energy acting in a direction oblique to the

rupturable plate to rupture the rupturable plate; and

an igniter supporting portion provided in the diffuser and making a direct contact with

and fixing the igniter in the diffuser portion, the igniter supporting portion reducing a cross

section of the gas discharge passage, such that the igniter supporting portion projects inwardly

into the gas discharge passage more than an inner surface of the diffuser portion.

11. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 1 or 10, further

comprising:

a diffuser tube, having a second gas discharge port, connected to the gas discharge port of

the diffuser portion.

12. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 11, wherein the

diffuser tube is arranged, such that a center axis of the diffuser tube and a center axis of the

inflator housing coincide or are parallel to each other.

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13. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 11, wherein the

diffuser tube has a plurality of second gas discharge ports in a peripheral face thereof, and the

plurality of second gas discharge ports are provided circumferentially at equal intervals.

14. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 13, further

comprising:

a filter, which catches fragments of the rupturable plate, being disposed in the diffuser

tube.

15. (previously presented) An inflator according to claim 12, wherein the

diffuser tube has a plurality of second gas discharge ports in a peripheral face thereof and the

plural second gas discharge ports are provided circumferentially at equal intervals.

16. (previously presented) An inflator, comprising:

a cylindrical inflator housing provided with an opening portion at one end thereof and a

closed portion at the other end thereof, and including a pressurized gas therein;

a diffuser portion connected to the opening portion and having a gas discharge port, the

diffuser portion including therein a gas passage extending from the inflator housing to the gas

discharge port;

a rupturable plate that closes at least a portion of the gas passage;

an igniter provided within the diffuser portion such that an axis of the igniter is

perpendicular to an axis of the cylindrical inflator housing, the igniter generating a combustion

product upon activation thereof; and

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a deforming member provided between the igniter and the rupturable plate, such that the

deforming member is prevented from making a direct contact with the rupturable plate prior to

activation of the inflator, and is deformed by the combustion product to cause the rupturable

plate to rupture by a deformation thereof.

17. (previously presented) The inflator according to claim 16, wherein the

deforming member is formed in a single piece and attached to the diffuser portion before

activation of the inflator.

18. (previously presented) The inflator according to claim 17, wherein the

deforming member is a circumferential portion of a cap that surrounds at least an igniting portion

of the igniter and is disposed in a direction perpendicular to the axis of the cylindrical inflator

housing.

19. (previously presented) The inflator according to claim 16, wherein the

deforming member includes a weakened portion that deforms upon receiving the combustion

product.

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